


## Large Spindle Piece

PUBLIC ART COLLECTION IDENTIFICATION SUMMARY	
	<b>Number:</b> 0014
	<b>Artist:</b> Moore, Henry (1898 - 1986)
	<b>Title:</b> Large Spindle Piece
	<b>Date:</b> 1969, Donated 1979
	<b>Type:</b> Sculpture
	<b>Medium:</b> Sculpture: Bronze, Base: Concrete
	<b>Dimensions:</b> Base: 2' x 7' x 7'
	<b>Foundry/Fabricator:</b> H. Noack, Berlin
	<b>Location/Environment:</b> Allen Parkway, Outdoors
<b>Provenance:</b> Given to the City of Houston by the Knox Foundation	

### Historical Background

The *Large Spindle Piece*, 1969, was originally part of Henry Moore's *Spindle* series, which was installed in London's Hyde Park in 1968 as a special homage to the British sculptor. The twelve foot tall, abstract sculpture was purchased from Moore by the Knox Foundation and given to the City of Houston in 1979, for placement outdoors. This sculpture was the second public artwork, after Oldenburg's *Geometric Mouse X*, by a recognized 20 th century modern master to be placed in the city.

Originally, the sculpture was going to be placed in Tranquillity Park in downtown Houston. Moore came to Houston to evaluate the area and eventually decided that the space was "too complicated" because of confined space and the "interfering" lines of architecture surrounding the proposed site. The greenbelt area along Allen Parkway and Buffalo Bayou, where the skyline recedes beyond a line of grass, trees and flowers, was selected as the ideal space that combined the sculptural form with the natural environment.

Moore was fascinated by seeing Michelangelo's depiction of God creating Man, where His and Adam's index fingers touch across an expanse of space, in the fresco at the Sistine Chapel. The *Spindle* series is the sculptural result of mulling this theme over for 40 years after visiting the Vatican.

Regarding this theme and the *Large Spindle Piece*, Moore said: "Sculpturally, it's two points just about to meet. This work is on the same theme, only the two fingers are going out, not in".

### Artist

Moore was born in 1868 in Yorkshire, England. In 1919 he abandoned teaching to practice art full time. Influenced almost entirely by natural forms, abstracted, primal shapes became his trademarks. A carver and a molder, he strove to find the forms which contain the "life" concealed within his materials. He used a variety of materials – stone, wood, and bronze –, which were always finished in a refined manner. His work exhibits an intensive three-dimensional sense of space. The negative spaces are as volumetric in his concept as the positive masses, thus creating a balance and unity throughout these sculptures.

### Physical Description

*Large Spindle Piece* was shipped to Houston from London in 1979, after Moore and City Council officially approved the site at Allen Parkway. The piece is a cast bronze abstract sculpture mounted on a circular, cast concrete base that is painted matte brown. The sculpture consists of curves, points, defined edges, and negative space. The artist's signature ( *MOORE 4/6* ) and foundry mark (H. Noak Berlin) appear on the lower edge, facing the Houston skyline.

### Restoration / Conservation

*Large Spindle Piece* was last restored in May 1997.